

JULY 27, 1978

For 30 days or more, the Shortgrass Country has been baking under a relentless sun. Newspapers and other media blab constantly of the heat wave. Hombres of weak fiber and low tolerance to the heat stay indoors. The rest of us go about our duties in a haphazard way. Crews of men run to a shade at the slightest chance to stop.

On one of these hot days, I ran across an old kid that spent part of last winter at our house. He'd become so much part of our life and cupboard that I was eager to know how he was passing the summer without my support.

He said he was plenty busy selling firewood in San Angelo. Citizens over there, so he said, were willing to pay handsome prices for a cord of wood. With no more investment than his daddy's chain saw and trailer, he was doing a rushing business.

As I've already established, this kid had practically been a member of the family, so I didn't feel shy about giving him some advice.

Here's exactly what I told him: " Son, starting right now, you keep a permanent record of your customers. Anybody, and I mean Anybody, who'll buy wood in the middle of a July heat wave is going to have lots of Christmas money in December, plus a warm house to enjoy his wealth. It's the old boys that are spending their money on sun glasses and suntan oil that you want to leave alone. The folks you are dealing with are the ones that have CDs at the bank; those other's belong in the other column."

I was so carried away by my burst of wisdom that I went on and told him to avoid cattle auctions and sheep barns, also. I'd have mentioned bright lights and women, but I don't like to talk about a handicap that can't be overcome.

Just think where that kid can go. He can be a leader of state or industry with that kind of backing. He has the chance of knowing folks of substance. The class he'll be meeting won't have to put their saddles on their financial statements. I bet he doesn't hang around my house next winter.